

**Central Falls School District
Board of Trustees
Minutes**

January 17, 2006

I. Call to Order:

The Central Falls School District Board of Trustees Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairperson, Mr. Robert Canavan.

Present were: Mr. Robert Canavan, Chairperson

Mr. Joseph Faria

Ms. Ana-Cano Morales

Ms. Ana Cecilia Rosado

Mr. Joel Roseman

Mr. Gus Silva

Absent: Ms. Mary Lou Perez

II. Public Comments:

Sue Levasseur asked if the board had received her exit interview. They stated they did not. Dr Watkins said she thought it might have

been delivered to her office that afternoon. but she did not get a chance to look at it. She thought the purpose of the interview was to look at trends and patterns and that would be hard to do with just one on file. Other people have left but not returned their interview.

Mr. Faria asked if they would have it at the next meeting. Dr. Watkins responded, yes.

Kerri Withrow, a teacher at the high school, was not sure if this was the correct forum to bring up the two concerns she had.

Her first concern was that she heard they would be giving students credit for advisory with no curriculum, only attendance. Therefore, they would have no real evidence to support the grade.

Her second concern was the potential for a new section of science, with one of the ESL classes having 31 students in it when the cap is 23. Instead of paying a teacher for the 8 students over the cap, why not have their .8 science teacher pick up an extra section. She thought it would be worth the district's .2 salary, saving money overall.

Mr. Canavan told her it was not on the agenda and could not be discussed at this time.

III. Approval of minutes:

Mr. Faria motioned to accept the minutes and seconded by Mr. Silva. Members voted 5-0 to accept with Ms. Rosado abstaining because she had not received them.

IV. Schedule of Bills:

Mr. Roseman asked who Dr. Stewart Flanagan was that they paid \$13,000 to. Dr. Watkins replied that that was the company that would do the benchmark assessment.

Mr. Canavan asked about the \$130 paid to Village Pizza. Dr. Watkins explained that there were several days of training and that the money did not come out of the general fund.

Mr. Roseman motioned to accept the bills and it was seconded by Mr. Faria and so it was voted 6-0.

V. Communication:

Resignations: Ms. Paula Arango, Home School Liaison, submitted her letter of resignation effective January 6, 2006, stating she was now a building sub at the high school.

Mr. Roseman motioned to accept and Ms. Cano seconded, so it was voted 6-0.

VI. Reports:

A. Administration:

Dr. Watkins reported that the task force at the high school would be continued by Manuela Raposa. The first meeting was held on January, 11, 2006. In attendance were Manuela, Sherry Cruz, Larry DeCoste, Margie Cruz, Carol Ann Pickett, Victor Ramos, Jackie Parra, and Angelo Garcia. The task force purpose is to look into the attendance at the high school and to come up with a solution to the problem.

Dr. Watkins told the board that Robertson and Feinstein Schools had started PTO's and she congratulated them.

Dr. Watkins mentioned the principals were participating in a two day training. The topics were intervention in schools and how to locate data. Teachers were introduced to the benchmark test data and will be able to see how the students are doing in school.

Dr. Watkins announced that the SES after school program would be starting next Monday. A meeting with all providers was held and they are aiming for 400 students. She wants to thank

Mario, all home school liaisons, and the teachers for their support.

Dr. Watkins also told the board that Scope held a meeting last week to discuss additional services they hope to provide to the community. She thanked Christine Gingerella and her staff.

Dr. Watkins thanked Diane for her MLK program and also the students that participated.

Dr. Watkins announced that Peter Wood was one of two people selected to be part of the RI Data Warehouse. She sent her congratulations to him. She also thanked Ann Mariano for introducing e-scholar to us.

Dr. Watkins informed the board that she was on the radio and would be once a month. She received a lot of calls from parents. She hoped it would inform parents of what is happening in the schools.

Dr. Watkins thanked former city council president, Mr. Robert Weber, and presented him with a plaque for his support of the schools over the years.

B. Chairperson:

Mr. Canavan said he would give a report next time.

C. Other:

Attorney, Mr. Piccirilli stated the decision on the Joan Sampson longevity grievance would be out soon. Mr. Roseman asked that Mr. Piccirilli let the grievance committee know when it goes to the next step. Mr. Piccirilli agreed.

VII. Personnel Matters:

A. Retirements:

None.

B. Resignations:

Paula Arango resigned her position as Home School Liaison for Robertson and Feinstein Schools effective January 6, 2006.

VIII. Appointments:

Dr. Watkins recommended that the following appointments be made:

- Donna Smith, Speech & Language Pathologist (3.5), district wide, 01/28/2006.**
- Paula Arango, Building Sub., Central Falls HS, 01/09/2006.**
- Sidney Okashige, Reading Specialist, Central Falls HS, 01/09/2006.**

- Patricia Bishop, Resource Teacher (after school) district wide, 01/05/2006.
- Olivia Louro, Social Worker (after school) district wide, 01/05/2006.
- Stephanie Racine, Team Leader, Calcutt MS, 01/04/2006.
- Karen Bradbury, Team Leader, Calcutt MS, 01/04/2006.
- Ronald Trahan, Team Leader, Calcutt MS, 01/04/2006.
- Karen Jerezao, Team Leader, Calcutt MS 01/04/2006.
- Gerald Lapierre, Team Leader, Calcutt MS, 01/04/2006.
- Danielle Clark, Team Leader, Calcutt MS, 01/04/2006.
- Michael Bento, Team Leader, Calcutt MS, 01/04/2006.
- Kerri Lapierre, Team Leader, Calcutt MS, 01/04/2006.
- Gertrude Dumont, Teacher Assistant, Central Falls HS, 12/07/2005.
- Linda Church, Teacher Assistant (Inclusion) Calcutt MS, 12/21/2005.
- Christine Skillern, Teacher assistant (1:1) Central Falls HS, 12/21/2005.
- Brian Goodheart, Asst. Wrestling Coach, Central Falls HS, 12/10/2005.
- Michael Occi, 9th Grade Advisor, Central Falls HS, 12/10/2005.
- Michael Swain, Asst. Boys Track Coach, Central Falls HS, 12/10/2005.
- Mary Holman, Teacher Assistant, Ella Risk, 12/09/2005.
- Niza Hernandez, Teacher Assistant, Cowden Street, 12/09/2005.
- Marissa DeBarros, teacher Assistant, (2d) Capt. Hunt School, 12/09/2005.
- Ann Fournier, Teacher Assistant (1:1), Calcutt MS, 12/09/2005.

Mr. Faria motioned to accept as outlined.

Mr. Roseman asked if this is the correct contract language. He also wanted to know why they did not approve the December appointments at the last meeting.

Dr. Watkins said she would check with human resources.

The motion was then seconded by Ms. Morales.

Mr. Dick Currier asked about a letter for a six month leave of absence and why it was not on the agenda.

Dr. Watkins replied that she had approved it already. She would check with human resources.

The board voted to accept the appointments and resignations 6-0.

IX. New Business:

A. Trip to France:

Hope Evanhoff, a teacher at the high school, gave the board a packet with information on the trip. She also presented a formal letter asking to take the trip. She told the board they had 4 students going. There would be 4 chaperones, herself, Monique Jacobs, and 2 other faculty members.

Attorney, Mr. Piccirilli, said he received a packet on Jan. 11, 2006 and it was acceptable. He approved the chaperones. He is preparing a waiver and release for the parents and guardians to sign and be kept on file. He also said it was an appropriate forum.

A motion was made and seconded, then it was passed 6-0.

Ms. Evanhoff thanked the board for their help.

B. Truancy Policy:

Dr. Watkins said Mr. Larry DeCoste was there if they had any questions. She also said the truancy went from 15% to 10%.

Mr. DeCoste passed out the policy. He told the board the four tardies equal one absence.

Mr. Roseman motioned to accept the truancy policy and Mr. Faria seconded.

Ms. Cano was concerned about whether the policy was translated in Spanish and asked when a parent is called, if the caller speaks the language that is spoken at home?

Mr. DeCoste replied yes and said he would fix the date.

So it was voted 6-0.

C. High School Update:

Dr. Watkins stated she attended a meeting for the high school and 140 parents were there. She said numbers have been decreasing for tardiness.

Dr. Watkins informed the board that there is a principal mentor at the high school who has been very supportive and is assisting the leadership there.

Dr. Watkins, last week, met with Mayor Moreau and Councilman Patino about the space problem at the high school. They decided it was necessary to form a committee to look at the issue. The committee members are Arthur Hanson, from the city, Ricardo Patino, City Councilman, and Frank Knott from the school district. They concluded that portable classrooms would not solve the space situation at the school. She said one suggestion was to move the ninth grade to another building. The committee would meet in the near future to try to resolve the problem.

Dr. Watkins told the board the Behavior Management Committee met and would be looking at different behavior models in Rhode Island.

Dr. Watkins stated the SIT Team is working on their by-laws and the

members were approved at the last meeting.

Dr. Watkins let the board know that on the two professional days, either Jan. 30 or Jan. 31, the students would start school at nine o'clock giving the teachers one hour and fifty minutes of staff development each day.

Dr. Watkins would like to see a restructure of the study hall and a reading/writing lab created. They are hoping to send some students to PE to reduce numbers in the study hall.

Mr. Roseman asked if it was realistic to say they would not have the needed space for some time.

Dr. Watkins replied that she hoped to have something in place by September 2006.

Mr. Roseman asked what kind of an impact the resource officer at the high school has had.

Dr. Watkins said she understands it has had a very positive impact. The officer felt welcome there and enjoys working with the students.

Mr. Roseman asked if anyone had come in to help with Schoolmax.

Dr. Watkins replied yes that someone from RIDE had been in. She

was not sure of the person's name.

Mr. Canavan asked about the possibilities of the school using the old channel1 building.

Dr. Watkins stated that she has not focused her search on the channel 1 building and she thought the committee would decide what was best for the school. It was mentioned that it would cost about one million dollars to repair it. Someone from the city came up with that price.

Mr. Roseman asked if the board could have an open meeting with the Mayor. Mr. Piccirilli said yes if they posted it 48 hours in advance. Then they could call an executive meeting.

Mr. Roseman wanted to discuss Kerri Withrow's comments

Dr. Watkins said she is working with RIDE on preliminary staffing and getting the monies. She was not aware of Ms. Withrow's concerns and she would speak to Mr. Kennedy. Kerri's point makes sense.

Mr. Roseman thought Mr. Kennedy was a good start then goes to the union.

Dr. Watkins is pretty sure that Mr. Kennedy would handle it. He was not aware of the problem until today. She would address it with him

tomorrow.

D. Facilities Study:

Dr. Watkins asked board members to take a look at the packet and possibly have a discussion at a later meeting.

Mr. Roseman stated his concern over how the lack of space would affect the environment and how it would not be a positive atmosphere for learning.

Mr. Canavan thought a solution could easily be in place by next year. A probable solution would be to move the ninth grade out of the building.

Mr. Roseman told Dr. Watkins that if she didn't think the committee was fast enough to let the board or RIDE know.

E. Annenberg Institute:

Dr. Watkins said they would be meeting on Feb. 6th to discuss trends

and patterns of the district and she would get back to them.

F. ESL first grade enrollment numbers:

Dr. Watkins said they already have fifty students in the first grade ESL. She is recommending that they open another classroom and has already secured funding for it. The class would be at Cowden, Vets, or Ella Risk School.

Ms. Morales was concerned about the increasing numbers and thought there was a need to bring in professionals on. She also mentioned a confidential report on ESL programs and services and said it was quite harsh.

Mr. Roseman cautioned about the report being one person's opinion and doesn't mean everything is black and white. We should wait to see if these comments agree with other reports.

Dr. Watkins recommends that they let Annenberg look in to it and wait for their report.

Jane Sessums asked if she could make a comment on the report for clarification, but was told no because it is confidential and would be discussed at future meeting with Annenberg. She was concerned about the accuracy of information sources. Again she was told it would be discussed later.

G. Update on BY-Laws for the Board of Trustees:

Mr. Piccirilli said he would have the draft at the next meeting and the members would get their packets prior to that meeting.

H. Update on Certified Union Contract:

The contract is at the printer.

Mr. Canavan asked to have the next meeting prior to the 17th of February to approve high school plan. The original meeting was scheduled for Feb. 14th. Mr. Canavan would be gone most of February. The new meeting date is Thursday, February 16.

Mr. Roseman would like Human resources report at the next meeting. He wants it on the agenda.

Mr. Canavan moved to executive session at 8 p.m. A joint motion was made by Mr. Faria and Mr. Silva.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.